

Warm up

Ask your students if they have ever struggled to understand what a teacher or lecturer is saying to them (most people have some experience of this). Get them to tell you what they think the problem was. Elicit suggestions such as speed of delivery, complex arguments, difficult vocabulary, difficult concepts, unclear speech, etc. Tell the class that they are going to look at some material which will help them listen specifically for explanations.

Using the Factsheet

Make sure students have completed and understood the Theory to practice section before starting the Worksheet.

There are two possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the Factsheet before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the Worksheet. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the Factsheet, and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the Factsheet at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.

Theory to practice**Answers**

- 1 c (*Traditionally, ... but more recently*)
- 2 f (*So why are these figures important?*)
- 3 a (*This ancient Chinese martial art*)
- 4 e (*they're useful. It's easier*)
- 5 d (*homeopathy, where patients are given*)
- 6 b (*the main reason is that*)

Using the Worksheet**Practice****1 Choose the correct word or phrase to introduce the explanation.**

- This first task focuses on simple linking phrases which can be used to introduce explanations.
- Allow 2–3 minutes for students to make their choices. They should work alone for this.
- Elicit answers from the class, encouraging students to explain why they are correct. Students should also be able to tell you why some of the wrong answers are inappropriate.

Answers

- a due to (*because of the financial crisis* would be correct)
- b which means that (you could only use *thanks to* as part of the longer phrase *thanks to the fact that*)
- c as
- d The main reason for this (the use of *therefore* would indicate a result, not a cause)
- e By this I mean that
- f Because of

2 01 Look at the extracts from talks and lectures, and predict which words or phrases might be used to complete them. There are many possible answers. Then listen and check.

- Do the first item as a class, so that students know what is expected of them.
- Point out that there is a question mark after the gap in item a. Remind students that one of the techniques for introducing explanations given on the Factsheet is the use of rhetorical questions. Tell the class that this gap needs such a question.
- Elicit several suggestions, e.g. *What do I mean?* Correct any mistakes, or any suggestions that don't quite fit in this context, but don't play the audio or tell them the correct answer yet.
- Allow a few minutes for students to work alone and predict the missing words and phrases. If, after a period of time, students seem to be having difficulty, allow them to compare notes with a partner.
- When everyone is ready, play the audio for students to check.

- When checking answers, make sure students realize that the answer they hear is not the only correct answer. Spend some time listening to what students have written. Reassure them that their answers (if appropriate) are perfectly acceptable. Where possible, point out what needs to happen to make wrong answers correct (see the information in brackets in the answers to Exercise 1).

Possible answers

Note: The first answer given below is the answer heard on the audio, but the other answers are perfectly acceptable. Students may suggest other possible answers.

- a What do I mean by double skin / What does this mean / What are these / How do they work
- b and by this I mean / in other words, / which means (that) / meaning (that) / that is,
- c due to / because of / thanks to / as a result of
- d And this is thanks to / This is caused by / This is due/down to / This can be explained by
- e because / since / as
- f that is, / in other words, / what I mean is / which means / the science of

Transcript

- a Finally, there are the double skin curtain walls. What do I mean by double skin? Well, there are two layers of window with a cavity in between, and this cavity acts as insulation against the hot sun.
- b But there's a reason it's been described as 'the most energy-efficient skyscraper in the world', and that's because it's essentially a 'smart tower' – and by this I mean it intelligently uses natural forces to maximize energy efficiency.
- c As you will know if you have prepared for this lecture, the Itaipu Dam is built on the Paraná River in South America, on the border of Brazil and Paraguay. And due to its location, the whole project has been shared between the two countries.
- d All around the world, people are living longer – in some cases, much longer – than they were in the past. And this is thanks to a number of factors, including improved medicine, diets and access to sanitation and health services.
- e And because the school is immersed in the jungle, the students are able to explore their relationship with the environment every day.
- f Hall pioneered the study of proxemics – that is, how the physical closeness of people is shaped by culture.

3 ▶ 02 Listen to a longer extract and answer the questions.

- Explain that students are going to practise listening for explanations. The audio is from *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 5, so students may remember it. This is not a problem, however, as here they are merely concerned with using certain prompts to help them find the explanations.
- Give students a minute or two to read the questions. Tell them to listen carefully for the answers to the questions (which are all in the form of explanations), and to write only the most relevant information.
- Play the audio. Students may have difficulty writing everything they want to after just one hearing. If they want you to, play it a second time.
- In checking answers, allow paraphrases of the suggested answers below.
- Try to get students to understand what pointed them in the direction of the answers as they were listening. They were as follows:
 - a a rhetorical question followed by 'let's say ...'
 - b 'Next time you walk through a city at night, notice ...'
 - c a rhetorical question followed by 'Well, there's ...' and 'Then there is ...'
 - d 'But there is a more fundamental issue ... and this is important ...'

Suggested answers

- a The excessive introduction, by humans, of artificial light into the environment.
- b Shops, restaurants and bars (trying to attract your custom); electronic advertising boards; street lights.
- c 1 The waste of energy.
2 We cannot see the sky any more, causing a loss of connection with the universe.

- d They have evolved around the light of the sun, the stars and the moon (e.g. birds use the moon and stars to navigate); because of light pollution they can't do this any more, so they are dying.

Transcript

First of all, I'll establish what we mean by 'light pollution'. Then I'll move on to why it's a problem, and I'll finish by evaluating some potential solutions.

So, what is light pollution? Well, there are various definitions, but for the purpose of this lecture let's say it is the *excessive* introduction, by humans, of artificial light into the environment. Most of us contribute to this, of course, through residential lighting or car lights, but that is only part of it. Next time you walk through a city at night, notice all the different light sources you see – from shops, restaurants and bars trying to attract your custom, from electronic advertising boards, and from street lights. Then there are big constructions that emit huge amounts of light into the environment – airports and sports stadiums, for example.

So, why is any of this a problem? Well, there's the waste of energy for a start – did you know that in the USA, eight per cent of the total energy is produced simply for outdoor lighting? Then there is the lack of dark skies for us to look at. For millions of years, we have looked up and seen the stars, the Milky Way, and the connection with the universe that gave us cannot be overlooked. But in any city in the world today, we simply cannot see much in the sky.

But there is a more fundamental issue ... and this is important ... the natural world (including humans) have evolved around the light of the sun, the stars and the moon. For example, birds use the moon and stars to navigate, but today, because of light pollution, these animals are dying in their thousands.

4 ▶ 03 Listen to someone talking about a process. In the spaces below, try to write down the key information you hear as part of the explanation.

- Remind students that some explanations come in the form of a list or a sequence of events (see Key features on the Factsheet).
- Refer students to the gaps they need to fill. Point out that they need to listen for the cues/signposts given (*First of all, Then, Now*). Tell them to listen carefully for the relevant information. They can write full sentences or notes.
- Play the audio. Play it a second time if students want you to.
- In checking answers, allow paraphrases of the suggested answers below.
- Finally, tell the class that they managed to find the key information using only three 'signposts' (*First of all, Then, Now*).


Suggested answers

First of all	we installed a conveyor belt that carried trays with used plates and cutlery into the kitchen / we asked the staff to put their used trays on the belt.
Then	we put rubbish bins next to the conveyor belt / we got staff to remove rubbish from the trays before they put them on the conveyor belt.
Now	(we are) monitoring to see how much difference that has made.

Transcript

I run our company's canteen. I noticed that the kitchen helpers were spending a lot of time cleaning up after every meal, so we all decided to look at ways of changing the process to save time. First of all, we installed a conveyor belt that carried trays with used plates and cutlery into the kitchen, and we asked the staff to put their used trays on the belt, instead of leaving them on the tables. That improved things a lot. Then one of my workers suggested we could work even faster if the staff removed all the rubbish – napkins, plastic cups, sugar packets and so on – from their trays before putting them on the conveyor belt. We have put rubbish bins next to the conveyor belt and are now monitoring to see how much difference that has made.

Reflect

- 5**  **Read through the checklist and the examples. Number the points in order (1–7) to show how important you think they are. Then compare and discuss your answers with a partner.**
- First of all, make sure the students understand the points in the checklist (the examples will help).
 - Allow a few minutes for students to rank the points. They can then discuss them with a partner. (The actual numbering is not important, but it is a way to focus students' minds on the points in the list.)
 - Open the discussion up to the class and make sure everyone has grasped the key points from the lesson.